

REQUEST FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

ACTIVITY DATA

Activity Name:	USAID Istdama Activity
Geographic Location(s) (Country/Region):	Jordan
Amendment (Yes/No), if Yes indicate # (1, 2...):	No
Implementation Start/End Dates (FY or M/D/Y):	April 2021-May 2021
If Amended, specify New End Date:	
Solicitation/Contract/Award Number(s):	TBD
Implementing Partner(s):	Jordan's Social Security Corporation
Bureau Tracking ID:	ME 21-31
Tracking ID of Related RCE/IEE (if any):	
Tracking ID of Other, Related Analyses:	

ORGANIZATIONAL/ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Implementing Operating Unit(s): (e.g. Mission or Bureau or Office)	USAID Jordan
Other Affected Operating Unit(s):	
Lead BEO Bureau:	Middle East
Funding Operating Unit(s): (e.g. Mission or Bureau or Office)	USAID/Jordan
Funding Account(s) (if available):	
Original Funding Amount:	\$40 million
If Amended, specify funding amount:	
If Amended, specify new funding total:	
Prepared by:	Briana Gamel, Farid Musmar
Date Prepared:	December 30, 2020

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE REVIEW DATA

Analysis Type:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Request for Categorical Exclusion <input type="checkbox"/> Deferral
Environmental Determination(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Categorical Exclusion(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Deferred (per 22 CFR 216.3(a)(7)(iv))
RCE Expiration Date (if applicable):	June, 2021
Additional Analyses/Reporting Required:	N/A
Climate Risks Identified (#):	Low ___ # ___ Moderate ___ # ___ High ___ # ___
Climate Risks Addressed (#):	Low ___ # ___ Moderate ___ # ___ High ___ # ___

THRESHOLD DETERMINATION AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Under Istdama, the GOJ will supplement the monthly wages of employees enrolled in the Social Security Corporation (SSC) over a 6-month period. The GOJ has outlined details of the program in Defense Order 24, which was announced on December 15, 2020. Istdama is the largest of four employment protection schemes to be implemented by the SSC. The other three are: Tamkeen Iqtisadi (economic empowerment in Arabic), which is an advanced lump-sum pension payment up to JD 300 for Jordanians and JD 200 for non-Jordanians); a temporary reduction of SSC retirement-age benefit contribution rates from 21.75% to 5.25%; and Hemayah (protection in Arabic), which subsidizes loans to the tourism and transportation sectors.

USAID/Jordan's Economic Development and Energy Office (EDE) intends to provide \$40 million for the Istdama program- or 44 percent of funds that the GOJ wants to raise from donors. USAID will provide these funds through a Fixed Amount Reimbursable Agreement (FARA) or a Joint Financing Agreement (JFA). EDE may also provide technical assistance to ensure that the Istdama initiative does not disincentivize private sector employment and sustainability. The program is designed to be short-term to prevent firms from expecting the GOJ to subsidize wages for a prolonged period.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATIONS

This activity is categorically excluded based on 22 CFR 216.2 (c)(iv), 216.2(c)(2)(vi), and 216.2(c)(2)(i). Please see below [TABLE 1](#) for detailed descriptions of the applicable CE categories.

Upon approval of this document, the determinations become affirmed, per Agency regulations (22 CFR 216).

TABLE 1: ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATIONS

Activities	Categorical Exclusion Citation (if applicable)
USAID Istdama Activity	§216.2(c)(iv) Projects in which USAID is a minor donor to a multi-donor project and there is no potential significant effects upon the environment of the United States, areas outside any nation's jurisdiction or endangered or threatened species or their critical habitat
	§216.2(c)(2)(vi) Contributions to international, regional or national organizations by the United States which are not for the purpose of carrying out a specifically identifiable project or projects
	§216.2(c)(2)(i) Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.)

CLIMATE RISK MANAGEMENT

This activity is exempt from CRM procedures as per listed mechanisms in section 1 of ADS201mal "Climate Risk Management for USAID Projects and Activities."

BEO SPECIFIED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

The technical assistance IP will ensure compliance with all host government and USAID requirements for disease prevention and ensure its staff and volunteers receive appropriate and timely guidance and training on the latest mitigation measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. This includes, but is not limited to proper hygiene, use of masks and gloves, cleaning/disinfecting, and social distancing, as appropriate.

IMPLEMENTATION

In accordance with 22 CFR 216 and Agency policy, the conditions and requirements of this document become mandatory upon approval. This includes the relevant limitations, conditions and requirements in this document as stated in Section 3 of this Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE) and any Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO) Specified Conditions of Approval.

USAID APPROVAL OF INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXAMINATION**ACTIVITY NAME:** USAID Istidama Activity**Bureau Tracking ID:** ME 21-31

Approval:	 Sherry F. Carlin, Mission Director	4/18/21 Date
Clearance:	Clear Daniel Swift, Economic Development and Energy	4/5/2021 Date
Clearance:	Clear John Spears, Program Office	1/7/2021 Date
Clearance:	Clear Haithem Ali, Mission Environmental Officer	1/7/2021 Date
Clearance:	CJF - Cleared by email Chris Frey, Regional Environmental Advisor	4/7/2021 Date
Clearance:	Clear Jeff Meyers, Regional Legal Officer	4/8/2021 Date
Clearance:	Clear Andrew McKim, Acting Deputy Mission Director	4/18/2021 Date
Concurrence:	 Jeff Ploetz, Middle East Bureau Environmental Officer	4/19/2021 Date

DISTRIBUTION:

- AOR/COR File
- Implementing Partner
- Environmental Compliance Database

1.0 ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE RCE

The purpose of this document is to establish that all proposed interventions under this activity belongs to classes of actions eligible for Categorical Exclusions as set out in Agency regulations (22 CFR 216.2(c)) and that there are no foreseeable significant direct or indirect impacts that would preclude it from receiving a Categorical Exclusion. Upon approval of this document, the Categorical Exclusions are affirmed for the activity. This analysis also documents the results of the activity level Climate Risk Management process in accordance with USAID policy (specifically, ADS 201 mandatory reference 201mal).

This RCE is a critical element of USAID's mandatory environmental review and compliance process meant to achieve environmentally sound activity design and implementation.

1.2 ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Under Istidama, the GOJ will supplement the monthly wages of employees enrolled in the Social Security Corporation (SSC) over a 6-month period. The GOJ has outlined details of the program in Defense Order 24, which was announced on December 15, 2020. Istidama is the largest of four employment protection schemes to be implemented by the SSC. The other three are: Tamkeen Iqtisadi (economic empowerment in Arabic), which is an advanced lump-sum pension payment up to JD 300 for Jordanians and JD 200 for non-Jordanians); a temporary reduction of SSC retirement-age benefit contribution rates from 21.75% to 5.25%; and Hemayah (protection in Arabic), which subsidizes loans to the tourism and transportation sectors.

1.3 ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

USAID/Jordan's Economic Development and Energy Office (EDE) intends to provide \$40 million for the Istidama program - or 44 percent of funds that the GOJ wants to raise from donors. USAID will provide these funds through a Fixed Amount Reimbursable Agreement (FARA) or a Joint Financing Agreement (JFA). EDE may also provide technical assistance to ensure that the Istidama initiative does not disincentivize private sector employment and sustainability. The program is designed to be short-term to prevent firms from expecting the GOJ to subsidize wages for a prolonged period.

TABLE 2: DEFINED OR ILLUSTRATIVE SUB-ACTIVITIES

Activity 1 — USAID Istidama
Sub-activity 1.1 Cash support through FARA or Joint Financing Agreement
Sub-activity 1.2 Technical Assistance

2.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

2.1 JUSTIFICATION FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

The interventions under the USAID Istidama Activity are among the classes of actions listed in 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2) and have no foreseeable significant direct or indirect adverse effect on the environment. Therefore, under 22 CFR 216.2(c)(1), neither an IEE nor an EA will be required for

these interventions. Instead, a Categorical Exclusion is recommended for the activity described above in Section 1.3 as follows:

TABLE 3: RECOMMENDED DETERMINATION FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

Sub-Activity #	Recommended Determination for Categorical Exclusion
Sub-activity 1.1 Cash support through FARA program or JFA	§216.2(c)(iv) Projects in which USAID is a minor donor to a multi-donor project and there is no potential significant effects upon the environment of the United States, areas outside any nation's jurisdiction or endangered or threatened species or their critical habitat
	§216.2(c)(2)(vi) Contributions to international, regional or national organizations by the United States which are not for the purpose of carrying out a specifically identifiable project or projects
Sub-activity 1.2 Technical Assistance	§216.2(c)(2)(i) Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.)

2.2 CLIMATE RISK MANAGEMENT

This activity is exempt from CRM procedures as per listed mechanisms in section 1 of ADS201mal "Climate Risk Management for USAID Projects and Activities."

3.0 LIMITATIONS OF THE CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

The categorical exclusions recommended in this document apply only to sub-activities described herein.

Other sub-activities that may arise must be subject to an environmental analysis and the appropriate documentation prepared and approved, whether it be a new Request for Categorical Exclusion, an amendment, or other type of 22 CFR 216 document.

It is confirmed that the sub-activities described herein do not involve actions normally having a significant effect on the environment, including those described in 22 CFR 216.2(d).

3.1 MANDATORY INCLUSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS IN SOLICITATIONS, AWARDS, BUDGETS, AND WORK PLANS

USAID will ensure the environmental compliance requirements are incorporated into solicitations, awards, budgets, and work plans, including relevant limitations of Section 3 above. In addition, climate risk management requirements will also be incorporated.

3.2 GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING REQUIREMENTS (IF APPLICABLE)

USAID will ensure that the following requirements are met:

- Provide briefings for Implementing Partner (IP) on environmental compliance responsibilities
- Ensure integration of compliance responsibilities in prime and sub-awards and grant agreements;
- Ensure compliance with applicable partner country requirements
- Annual review of sub-activities to ensure that scope is still covered by Categorical

Exclusion

ATTACHMENTS:

No attachments.